

A New Piece of Witchcraft

M.J. GELLER, LONDON

The discovery of incantations in both phonetic Sumerian and Old Babylonian bilingual versions is extremely rare. The lengthiest and best known case was edited by A. Falkenstein already in 1939, and in 1973 a unilingual Sumerian duplicate in normal orthography from the John Rylands Library in Manchester was published by C. Wilcke (see below). The identification of another new duplicate from Nippur, in early OB script, has provided an opportunity to wring out more philological data from this important text, and no more appropriate forum could be found than a volume in honour of Åke Sjöberg. The incantation itself is intended to oppose a witch who makes a figurine of her victim, and certain similarities to Maqlû incantations have been cited in the notes.¹

a = KUB 30, 1 (copy H. Eheloff), edited by A. Falkenstein in ZA 11 (1939) 8-41 (photo pl. 5). Col. i = lines 1-12, 20-23; col. ii = lines 43'-46', 62'-66'. The reverse of the text is not edited here, since no new duplicates have been found.

b = CBS 332 (PBS 1/2, 122), collated. Obv. = lines 1-25; rev. = lines 41'-49', 53', 58', 64'-78'. Since the tablet is now more damaged than when F. Lütz copied it, some signs now broken or lost can only be read from the copy.

c = Rylands Box 24 P 28 (Wilcke, AfO 24 [1973] 10ff.); collated. Lines 1-40 (omitting 20, 24).

d = CBS 11933 (copy pp. 204-205). Col. i = lines 3-11; col. ii = lines 16-32, 37'; col. iii = lines 43'-61'; col. iv = lines 79'-80'.

1. The author thanks Thorkild Jacobsen and Irving Finkel for much useful advice and helpful criticism, and P. Michalowski for collations.

Transliteration

- 1 a [i]n-e₂-nu-ru
 a u₃-ḥu-ul i-gi ḥu-ul ga₂-al du-mu ḥa-la-am-ma-ak-ke
 b [ḥul]-^rgal₂ igi¹-[.]
li-li-tu₄ ša^ri¹-[in-ša lem-ne-et]
 c ^rḥul¹-gal₂ igi ^rḥul¹ dumu ḥa-lam-ma-k[e₄]
- 2 a u₃-uz-zum uš-ra-a šu-ta-ta-ak-ke le-e-la-a i-bu-bu
 b uš₇-zu uš₇-ri š[u-.]
ki-iš-pu ru-ḥu-u₂ it-t[a-na-ar-pu-ud . . .]
 c uš₇-zu uš₇-ri-a šu-dag-dag-[ge] nita-lil₂-la₂-am₃ i₃-bu-b[u]
- 3 a ki-si-ki-il-le šu-da a-la-al-le-g[e[?]] i-gi-in im-ma-ab-[zu]
 ḥa-ma-an-ze₂-er šu im-ma-[. . . .]
 b ki-sikil guruš [.] i₃-gen im abzu
 ḥabrud-da ḥumuze[r (SIG₂.ŠAB)]
et-lam u₃ wa-ar-da-^rtu¹ [.] il-li-ik-ma ti-ta-am i-na abzu i-na ḥu-u[r-ri-im]
 c ki-sikil guruš šu-du₃-a a₂-la₂-^re¹-[de₃] i₃-gen im a[bzu ḥabr]ud-da
 ḥumuzer-re [š]u i[m-. . . .]
 d [.] ^ra₂¹-la₂-e-^rde₃¹ [.] ḥabru[d-^rda¹
 ḥumuzer ^ršu im¹-ma-ab-ti
- 4 a a-la-am mu-un-gi-im ḥa-ma-a[n-ze₂-er] šu ma-an-g[u-ur]
 b alam mu-un-dim₂ ḥumuzer šu i[m-. . . .]
 b *i-pu-uš-ma mu-ša-te₄ [.]*
 c [ala]m mu-un-dim₂ ḥum[uz]er-[r]e ^ršu¹ i[m-ma-an-gu]r
 d [ala]m mu-un-dim₂ ḥumuzer-a šu ^rba¹-an-gur
- 5 a mu-su-ub-an-ni lu ba-ki-i[k-ir]
 b munsub-a-ni lu₂ ba-an-g[ir₁₁[?]-. . .]
i-na ^rša¹-ra-ti-šu ^rra¹-[ki-is]
 c [mun]sub-a-ni lu₂ ba-an-gir₁₁[g]ⁱ-ir-gir₁₁-^rre¹ (coll.)
 d [mun]sub-a-^rna lu₂¹ ba-an-gir₁₁-gir₁₁
- 6 a uš i-ni^r-di sa bi-in-[. . . .]
 b uš₇ i-ni-in-de₂ ki-a [.]
^rru-uḥ¹-tam id-di-ma i-na er-še-tim i[q-bir]
 c [u]š₇ i-ni-in-du₁₁ ki-a ^rbi₂¹-in-tum₂-m[a]
 d [u]š₇ i-ni-in-de₂ [k]i-a bi₂-in-tum₂
- 7 a uš-du-ut-tu ni-gu-ug-g[u-. . .] i-ta'-ta-ak-ke
 b uš₇-du₁₁-du₁₁ nig₂-gu₇-gu₇ [. . .]
ki-iš-pi₂ i-pu-uš-ma i-na ma-ka-lim ^ršu¹-u[d^r-du]
 c [u]š₇-du₁₁-du₁₁ nig₂-gu₇-^rka¹ ga₂-ga₂
 d [u]š₇-du₁₁-du₁₁ nig₂-gu₇-ka ga₂-^rga₂¹
- 8 a uš kaš [. . . .] i-ni-im-ga₂-ar ḥu-u[l . . .] x x
 b [u]š₇ kaš-e de₂-a eme-gar ḥul g[i[?] . . .]
^rru-uḥ-tim ši-ka-rum ^rid¹-di-ma lem-ni-iš [.]
 c [u]š₇ kaš-a ^rde₂-e¹ eme-gar ḥul ^rgi¹-ga
 d [u]š₇ kaš uš₇-ri-a ^reme¹-[ga]r ^rḥul¹ [. . .]-ga

- 9 a lu-ul-lu pa-ap-ḥa-al-la [k]i-¹a¹ n[u-u]n-za-a ba-ni-ib-di-ib-be₂
 b [. . .]-¹ulu₃¹ pap-ḥal-la ki nu-zu-a ¹ba¹-[.]
 [a-wi-lam m]u-ut-ta-al-li-kam i-na la ¹i¹-du-¹u₂¹ [.]
 c lu₂-u₁₈-lu pap-¹ḥal-la ki¹ nu-zu-a-ni ¹ba-an-gen¹
 d lu₂-ulu₃ ¹pap-ḥal¹-l[a] ¹ki¹ nu-zu-a-ni ba-ab-dib
- 10 a lu-bi šu-si-iq-qa ba-an-še gi-ri-si-iq-qa ba-an-še sa-ad-ni-im im-šu-ub
 b ¹lu₂¹-ulu₃-bi a₂-šu-giri₃-ni ¹sa-ad-nim¹ [.]
 i-na ma-na-ni-šu [ša]-¹aš₂-ša-tu₃¹ [id-di] (coll.)
 c lu₂-u₁₈-lu-bi a₂-šu-giri₃-ni sa-ad-nim im-šub
 d ¹lu₂¹-ulu₃-bi a₂-šu-giri₃-na [. . a]d-ni ugu-na i-im-šub
- 11 a za-¹ag¹-še im-g[u]-g[u-r]a a-gi-ga i-i
 b zag-še im-gur₂-gur₂ ¹a₂¹-gig-ga [. . .]
 a-ḥa-a-šu -su₂ uš-š[a-]
 c zag-še im-gur₂-gur₂ (om.)
 d zag-še im-gur₂-gur₂ ¹a₂-ni¹ [mu]-¹un¹-gal₂
- 12 a a-sa-a[l-lu-ḥi] ¹i¹-gi im-ma-an-si^{*}
 b ⁴asal-lu₂-ḥi igi [i]m-ma-an-[. . .]
 c ⁴asal-lu₂-ḥi igi im-ma-an-si₃
- 13 b a-a-ni ⁴en-ki-ra e₂ ba-ši-in-ku₄ [.]
 c a-a-ni ⁴en-ki-ra e₂-a ba-an-ši-in-ku₄ gu₃ mu-na-de₂-e
- 14 b a-a-mu ḥul-gal₂ igi ḥul dumu ḥa-¹lam¹-m[a-ke₄]
 c a-a-mu lu₂-uš₇-ri-a a-¹na ba-an-ak¹-e ga₂-e ba-da-la₂-e-en
- 15 b a-ra₂-min-kam₂-ma-aš u₃-ub-da a-na ba-ni-ib-g[i₄-g]i₄
 c a-na ib₂-be₂-en-na-bi nu-zu a-na ¹ba-ni-ib¹-gi₄-gi₄
- 16 b ⁴en-ki-ke₄ dumu-ni ⁴asal-lu₂-ḥi mu-na-ni-ib₂-g[i₄-g]i₄
 c ⁴en-ki-ke₄ dumu-ni ⁴asal-lu₂-ḥi mu-un-na-ni-ib-gi₄-gi₄
 d ¹en¹-[.] mu-u[n-]
- 17 b dumu-mu a-na-am₃ na-e-zu a-na-am₃ a-ra-ab-daḥ-¹e¹
 c [. . .]-mu a-na nu-e-zu a-na a-ra-ab-daḥ-e
 d dumu-mu a-n[a] a-na a-r[a-]
- 18 b ⁴asal-lu₂-ḥi a-na-am₃ na-e-zu a-na-am₃ a-ra-ab-daḥ-e
 c ⁴asal-lu₂-ḥi-e a-na nu-e-zu a-na a-ra-ab-daḥ-e
 d ⁴asal-lu₂-[.] a-na a-r[a-]
- 19 b nig₂-ga₂-e i₃-zu-a-mu u₃ za-e in-ga-¹e¹-zu u₃ za-e in-ga-e-zu ga₂-e i₃-zu
 c [n]ig₂-ga₂-e zu-a-mu u₃ za-e in-ga-e-zu
- 20 a g[e-en-na du-m]u-gu a-sa-al-lu-ḥi
 b gen-na dumu-mu ⁴asal-lu₂-ḥi
- 21 a ¹i¹-[. . .] si-ki-il-la-a-ta: [. . .]-e u₃-bi-re-s[i]
 b a kar sikil-la-ta ^{duš}sakar u₃-ba-e-ni-si
 me-e kar-ri el-lim i-na mu-ul-li-šu
 c a kar sikil-la-ta ^{duš}sakar u₃-mu-¹e¹-ni-si
 d esir kar sikil-l[a- . .] ^{duš}sakar ¹u₃¹-[.]

- 22 a [.] in-nu-[. .] : [. . . -s] i gi-šu-[ul-ḫi]
 b ^{gi}šini^{gi}g ^uin-nu-uš 'naga-si¹ gi-šul-ḫi
 c ^{gi}šini^{gi}g ^uin-nu-uš naga-si gi-šul¹-[. .]
 d ^{gi}šini^{gi}g [.] naga-si-e D[U]
- 23 a [. š] a₃-¹bi u₂¹-[.]
 b ^{gi}li [. -bab] bar-ra
 b bu-ra-ša [.]
 c ^{sim}li ^{gi}eren-babbar ša₃-bi u₃-me-ni-¹gar¹
 d ^{sim}li g [i³] 'ša₃-ba¹ [.]
- 24 b ¹na₄gi-rin-na ^{na}₁za-nir₂ [. . .] ^{na}₄za-muš-[gir₂] (coll.)
 b [. muš-gar]-ra
- 25 c [. . .]-šub-ba eridu^{ki}-ga u₃-me-si₃
 d nam-šub eridu^{ki}-[.]
 b [.]-¹si₃¹ (coll.)
- 26 c l[u₂]-u₁₈-lu-bi a ugu-sag-ga₂-na u₃-me-¹de₂¹
 d lu₂-ulu₃-¹bi¹ a [.]
- 27 c nig₂-¹ak¹ su-a gal₂-la-ni a-gin₇ he₂-em-¹zal-le¹ (coll.)
 d nig₂-ak su g[al₂- . . .] a-gin₇ h[e₂-]
- 28 c ir-gin₇ su-a-na he₂-em-ma-ra-¹e₁₁¹
 d uš₇-¹ri¹ šu-n[a]
- 29 c im-e ḫa-ba-ab-re₇-eš
 d im-e 'ḫa¹-ba-a[b]
- 30 c 'uš₇¹-zu nig₂-ak 'uš₇¹-ḫul-dim₂-ma-ni
 d uš₇-zu uš₇-r[i-a]
- 31 c ⁴giš-BIL.GA.MEŠ-¹e¹ ka-keš₂¹-bi u₃-me-du₈
 d (om.)
- 32 c ki-ma[h⁷ t]um₂-ma-na [ba]r-[š]¹e₃ 'na-an-š₂i¹n¹-te-ge₂₆
 d 'ki¹ bi₂-in-[tum₂⁷] 'x x na¹-an-[.]
- 33 c nig₂-zu nig₂-ak uš₇ ḫul-dim₂-ma-ni
- 34 c šu-si-ni g[a-ar]a₃-¹gin₇¹ ḫe₂-tukur₂-re
- 35 c inim-ma-ni esir-gin₇ ḫe₂-šid-šid-e
- 36 c arḫuš kaš ⁴nig₂-¹dur₂¹-bur₃-gin₇ 'ḫe₂¹-bi-iz-bi-iz-e
- 37 c ⁴utu di-ku₅ an-ki-a n[am] gig-ga ḫe₂-ni-tar
 d [. -k] u₅⁷ an-[k]i⁷ [.]
- 38 c 'a¹ne₃-eri₁₁-gal lug[al-ur]ugal-la-ke₄ [ged]im-ma-ni ge[di]m nu-šid-de₃
- 39 c [a⁴ni]n-giš-zi-da gu-[za]-la₂ kur-ra-ke₄
- 40 c 'gedim¹-ma-ni-še₃ a-šed₁₀¹ 'ḫe₂¹-ni-in-ku₅-ku₅-¹de₃¹ (coll.)
- GAP?

- 41' b ^dgiš-BIL¹. [GA.MEŠ(?) . . k] a-^rkeš₂-bi hu-mu-du₈¹
 b *ki-iš-ri-šu li-pa-aṭ-te₄-er*
- 42' b uš₇-zu uš₇-ri-a-ni amar-di₄-di₄-la₂-gin₇
 b *ru-ša ki-ma wa-at-mi ^rše¹-eḫ-ḫe-ru-tim*
- 43' a [.] sa-šu-uš-[ga-al]
 b lu₂-sis uš₇-ri-a-ni ^{sa}sa-šu₂-uš-gal hu-mu-šu₂
 b *ša-lam-ti ka-aš-ša-ap-ti šu-a-ti [l]i-is-ḫu-up*
 d [.] ^{sa}[š]
- 44' a a-an-su-g[i-im]
 b an-su₃-gin₇ ša₃-bi šu ḫe₂-en-sur-re-eš
 b *ki-ma ša₃-šu a-ia i-ne₂-eš (coll.)*
 d su₃-an-g[in₇] ša₃-bi ^ršu¹ ḫ[e₂]
- 45' a du-mu [.]
 b dumu gir₂-tab-ba-gin₇ uš₇-ri-a-ni uš₇-zu-e-ne ḫe₂-š[ub-b]u-uš
 b *ki-ma ša ka-ša-ap-tu₂ šu-a-ti ki-iš-pu-ša li-ša-am-qi₂-tu-šu₂*
 d dumu gir₂-tab-ba-g[in₇] ḫe₂-^ršub¹-[.]
- 46' a ^rsa-UD ma²-da²¹-[al]
 b sa-UD gazinbu(GIŠ.BU)-gin₇ uš₇-zu-e-ne ḫe₂-b[a]l-uš
 d sa-UD-a gazinbu-g[in₇] ḫe₂-b[al . . .]
 b *ši-ir-a-ni-ša ki-ma ga-ši-ši-im ka-ša-ap-tu₂ šu-a-ti [l]i-iḫ-ru-u₂*
- 47' b uš₇-zu ni₂-te-na-še₃ šu ḫa-ba-ab-zi
 d ^ruš¹ ni₂-te-n[a . . .] ^ršu ḫa¹-[.]
 b *ki-iš-pu-ša a-na ra-ma-ni-ša li-^rin¹-na-ad-ru*
- 48' b agan₂ a₂-kuš₃-a-ni ^rzu₂¹ ḫe₂-ku₃-ku₃-e
 d ^ragan₂ a₂¹-[. z]u₂ ḫ[e₂]
 b *ši₂-ri-is-sa₃ i-na am-ma-t[i-š]a li-ba-ši₂-ir*
- 49' b šu-si-ni-ga-ara₃-gin₇ [ḫe₂-tuk]ur₂-e
 d ^ršu-si-ni¹ [.]
 b *-ša ki-ma ba-a[š₂¹-lī⁷]*
- 50' d ^{dug}mas-su₃-gi[n₇] ḫa-b[a]
- 51' d ^{dug}nig₂-dur₂-bur₃-gin₇ [. . . ḫe₂-bi-iz-bi-iz-e(?)]
- 52' d ^{si}isimu₂^{sr}-g[in₇]
- 53' d a-u₂-ni urgu₂-a [.]
 b ^{uz}u²a-u₂-na [.] ḫa-ba-laḫ^{la-ab} (coll.)
 b ^ri-na¹ li-iq pi₂-ša ^rx¹ [. . . li-bal]
- 54' d ka-la₂ dug-ni nam-m[u]
 (NB. Line 46 follows on Ms d.)
- 55' d ^dasal-lu₂¹-ḫi nam-š[ub eridu^{ki}-ga-ke₄]
- 56' d lu₂-ulu₃ dumu dingir-[ra-na] ḫe₂-sikil ḫe₂-[ku₃ ḫe₂-dadag]
- 57' d silim-ma-na šu s[a₆-ga dingir-ra-na-še₃] ḫe₂-em-ši-in-[gi₄-gi₄]

- 58' b [^an]e₃-iri₁₁-gal en-gal kur-[ra . . . -b]i⁷ ʔe₂-a
 d ^ane₃-iri₁₁-gal e[n-]
 b [.] ¹x¹ šu-a-ti
- 59' d giš-zu uš₇-zu u[š₇¹-ri⁷-a⁷]
- 60' d ^agibi[l₆]
- 61' d lu₂-u[lu₃ dumu dingir-ra-na]
 GAP
- 62' a u₃-¹uz-zum¹ [.]
- 63' a gi-iš-šu-ub-gi-im [.]
- 64' a ni-in-nu-u[r-ta] ma-as-[su/sag]
 b [^an]in-urta ur-sag ka[la-ga] ʔe₂-a
- 65' a u₃-tu di-iq-q[u] ka-ar ga-al [.]
 b ¹utu di-ku₅¹ gal dingir-re-¹e¹-[ne-ke₄] ʔe₂-a
- 66' a ¹ni¹-i[n-]
 b ¹nin¹-giš-zi-da gu-[za-la₂ dingir-re-e-ne-ke₄] ʔe₂-a-zu ka-silim-m[a]
- 67' b ¹gibil₆¹-ka maš-ma[š⁷] ʔe₂-a-zu ni[r-gal₂]
 b iz-x-[.]
- 68' b ¹ur⁷-sag⁷ ^aid₂-lu₂-r[u-gu₂] ʔe₂-a
- 69' b gi-en₃-bar-gin₇ uš₇⁷ [.] ʔ[e₂-a]
 b [k]i-ma ¹ka⁷¹-[.]
- 70' b inim an-na inim ¹en-ki-ga¹-[ke₄]
 b i-na [.]
- 71' b lu₂-ulu₃ dumu dingir-ra-na [ʔe₂-en-ku₃-ga ʔe₂-en-sikil-la ʔe₂-en-dadag]
 b šu-[u₂]
- 72' b ^{na}bur-šakan-gin₇ [u₃-me-ni-ḥu-luḥ-luḥ-ḥe]
- 73' b ^{na}bur-i₃-nun-na-gin₇ [u₃-me-ni-su-ub-su-ub-be₂]
 b ki-ma pu-ri [.]
- 74' b ^autu sag-kal dingir-re-e-ne-¹ke₄¹ [šu-na u-me-ni-si₃]
 b a-na x-[.]
- 75' b ^autu sag-kal [dingir-re-e-ne-ke₄ silim-ma-na]
 šu sa₆-ga dingir-ra-ni-še₃ [ʔe₂-en-ši-in-gi₄-gi₄]
- 76' b dingir lu₂-ba-ke₄ ^aen-ki ^a[asal-lu₂-ḥi ʔe₂-a(?)]
 b i-li lu₂ šu-a-ti u₃ [^ae₂-a u₃ ^amarduk]
- 77' b lu₂ ba-an-¹dab¹ [.]
 b ¹šu¹-u₂ [.]
- 78' b ¹inim ^aen-ki¹-ga-ke₄ [ʔe₂-en-ku₃-ga]
 b [i-na a-mat ^ae₂]-¹a¹ l[i-lil]
 GAP

79' d [d⁴asal-lu₂-hi dumu eridu]^{ki}-ga-ke₄ [tu₆-tu₆-e abzu] ^reridu^{ki}-ga
[nam-m]u-un-da-an-bur₂-re

80' d [t]u₆ en₂ e₂-nu-ru

Translation

- 1 The evil one (var. *lilith*) whose eye is evil, a child-snatcher,
chases after sorcery and magic and wanders about like a male wraith.
She went to (spell)bind an ensnared maid or lad by taking *abzu*-mud from a hole and
loose hair;
she fashioned a figurine and wrapped it in the loose hair.
- 5 Tying "him" (the figurine) with (the victim's) hair,
she spat on it, and buried it in the earth.
She performed the spell, which was dropped in (his) food,
and poured spittle into (his) beer, (putting him) in a hostile mood.
She made the distraught man walk about disoriented.
- 10 She caused paralysis in the victim's limbs,
so that he twists his shoulders, and his sides cause pain.
Asalluhi took note,
he went unto his father Enki in the temple, saying,
"My father, the evil one (whose) eye is evil is a child-snatcher, (var. my father, [only] you
can show me what you would do for the bewitched man)."
- 15 When he spoke a second time (var. "I do not know what to do about it"), "What can relieve
him?"
Enki answered his son Asalluhi,
"My son, what do you not already know, and what can I add to it?
Asalluhi, what do you not already know, what can I add to it?
Whatever I know you also know (var. adds: and I know that you also know it).
- 20 Go, my son Asalluhi,
When you have filled a porous pot with water (var. pitch) from a pure quay,
you put tamarisk, *innuṣ*, 'horned alkali', and *ṣulḫi* reed,
juniper, and white cedar inside (the pot),
as well as *girinna*, *zanir*, and *zamuṣ* stones,
- 25 and you then cast the Eridu incantation,
and pour the liquid over the head of that man,
so that the magic which he has in (his) body may flow away like water,
so that (the magic) in his body (var. the spell in her possession) may evaporate like sweat,
(when) the winds have wafted it away."
- 30 As for her sorcery, magic, and the evil praxis:
when Gilgamesh will have broken that spell and bonds,
and once he has buried (it), she cannot approach (the victim's) body.
As for her expertise, magic, and evil praxis:
may she gnaw at her own fingers like cheese,
- 35 may she always pronounce her words like pitch,
and may (her) womb drip beer like a fermenting vat.

May Utu, judge of heaven and earth, decide a bitter [fate] for her.
 May Nergal, lord of the Netherworld, not reckon her dead spirit as a proper ghost.
 May Ningišzida, throne-bearer of the Netherworld,

40 cut off the cold water (offering) to her dead spirit.

GAP

May Gilgamesh⁷ break her spell.

May a cage cover her spell and hex like young animals, and even the corpse of this witch.

Like heavenly lights may (the victim's) heart not weaken,

45' and may her own sorceries plague the witch like a baby scorpion.

May they dig into her white flesh as (with) a stake,

and may (the witch's) own sorcery prey upon her.

May she bite her breasts in her (folded) forearms,

and may she gnaw at her own fingers like cheese.

50' Like a *massu*-vessel, may [.],

and may the fermenting vat [.]

[Like] a shoot [.]

May anger dry up [the saliva?] in her palate,

and may the stopping of her vessel's mouth not [.]

55' May Asalluhi, [with the Eridu] incantation,

cleanse, [brighten, and purify] the man, son [of his] god,

and may he [entrust him] in security [to] the benevolent hand [of his personal god].

Whether it be Nergal, the great lord of the Netherworld, at that [. . .]

. . . , spell, and . . . [.]

60' [or whether it be] Gibil [.]

the man, [son of his god]

GAP

The spell [.]

like fate [.]

Whether it be Ninurta, mighty hero, [.]

65' or whether it be Utu, great judge of the gods, [.]

or whether you be Ningišzida, [the divine] throne-[bearer], or the lordliness

of Gibil, the [divine?] incantation priest, or whether it be the noble

hero⁷, Idlurugu [.]

or whether the spittle be like a lagoon, [. . .]:

70' by the command of An and command of Enki [. . .]

may the man, son of his god, [become clean, bright, and pure].

[Wash him] like an oil jar,

and [scrub] him like a butter dish,

[assign him to] Utu, foremost [of the] gods,

75' [so that] Utu, foremost [of the gods, can entrust him in safety] to the benevolent hand of

his personal god,

[whether it be] the personal god of that man, or Enki or [Asalluhi].

That man was seized [.]

By order of Enki [may he be purified],

GAP

[and Asalluhi, son] of [Eridu], intends to break (the spell) with [the incantations of the

Abzu] of Eridu.

Commentary

Line 1: There is some ambiguity regarding the identity of the antagonist, since in the opening line she is referred to in Sumerian simply as ḫul-gal_2 "evil one," but curiously rendered in Akkadian as a "lilith," showing that the usual equation between lil_2tu and $\text{ki-sikil-lil}_2\text{-la}_2$ is imperfect within the terminology for this group of male and female demons:

$\text{lil}_2\text{-la}_2/\text{lu}_2\text{-lil}_2\text{-la}_2/\text{guruš-lil}_2\text{-la}_2$	= lil_2
$\text{ki-sikil-lil}_2\text{-la}_2$	= lil_2tu
$\text{ki-sikil-lil}_2\text{-la}_2 \text{ ud-da-kar-ra}$	= ardat lil_2

One would expect $\text{ki-sikil-lil}_2\text{-la}_2$ to be translated by ardat lil_2 , and that the term $\text{mi}_2\text{-lil}_2\text{-la}_2$ should be equated with the "female $\text{lil}_2\text{-la}_2$," i.e. lil_2tu , but only in late Akkadian contexts is $\text{mi}_2\text{-lil}_2\text{-la}_2$ used as a logogram for lil_2tu (cf. CAD L 190). It is therefore possible that the bilingual associations of ḫul-gal_2 and lil_2tu in our text represent a variant tradition of demonic nomenclature.

$\text{u}_3\text{-ḫu-ul}$ in Ms. a may be for $\text{u}_3\text{-< dug > ḫul}$, and the reading $\text{nita-lil}_2\text{-la}_2$ in line 2 (Ms. c) is noteworthy as another variation of the $\text{guruš-lil}_2\text{-la}_2$ and $\text{lu}_2\text{-lil}_2\text{-la}_2$.

The phrase $\text{dumu ḫalam-ma-ke}_4$ is analysed here as $\text{dumu(-ak) ḫalam-AK-e}$ "causing the disappearance of children," following Falkenstein's translation "das die Kinder zugrunde richtet," ZA 11 (1939) 19.

Line 2: Note that in Lutz's copy of Ms. b, KAXLI as found on the tablet is consistently copied as KAXBAD throughout, but like all of the duplicates $\text{uš}_7(\text{KAXLI})$ is the correct reading, even when referring to either spells or spittle. These writings of KAXLI weaken the argument put forward by M.-L. Thomsen in *Zauberdiagnose und Schwarze Magie in Mesopotamien* (Copenhagen, 1987), that uš_{11} for "spell" can be etymologized as KA "mouth" and uš_2 "to die," since $\text{uš}/$ is written KAXLI in older manuscripts.

Line 3: Ms. a has misread guruš as $/e/$ (given as le), and presumes a verbal form $\text{a}_2\text{-lal-e-de}_3$.

For $\text{šu-du}_3\text{-a}$, cf. CAD K 129a.

Line 4: Note the error in Ms. a of choosing the value GIM for epēšu , instead of the expected value dim_2 .

Line 5: The phonetic reading in Ms. a of ba-ki-i[k-ir] , for $\text{ba-gi(r}_{11}\text{)-gir}_{11}$, supports the reading of the gloss as $[\text{g}]\text{i-ir}$ for gir_{11} (although $[\text{ḫ}]\text{i-ir}$ could be an alternative reading). The reading gir_{11} is well attested for EZEN, but usually corresponds to Akkadian šamādu and not rakāsu .

A parallel text occurs in Maqlû I 131-3, "(The witch), who made figurines representing me and made (them) resemble my appearance, who took my spittle and plucked out my hair, who cut off my hem and gathered the trodden dust of my feet"; cf. Thomsen *Zauberdiagnose* 33 and 74f.

Line 6: The ki sign of the duplicates was misread in Ms. a as di , then misread again phonetically as sa !

Line 7: Cf. CT 17, 32:14-15, $\text{uš}_{11} \text{ du}_{11}\text{-du}_{11}\text{-ga-kam}_2 // \text{ru-u}^2\text{-tu}_4 \text{ na-di-tu}_4$, literally "spittle spat," indicating that spittle in the victim's food and beer served as a medium for the spell.

Mss. c and d both read $\text{nig}_2\text{-gu}_7\text{-ka}$, which could either be taken as erroneous for $\text{nig}_2\text{-gu}_7\text{-gu}_7$, following Mss. a and b, or else as $\text{/nig}_2\text{-gu}_7\text{-ak-a/}$, i.e. "(she) was present ($\text{ga}_2\text{-ga}_2$) in the spat-out spell of the foodstuffs."

The verbal form in Ms. a is phonetic for $\text{i}_3\text{-ta(g)-tag-ga}$, which conforms with $\text{ga}_2\text{-ga}_2$ as equivalents to Akkadian nadû in the sense of "to drop, hurl"; cf. CAD N/1 285, citing Idu II 353-4 (= CT 11, 31:36-7): $\text{ta-ag tag} = \text{na-ba-šu}$, na-du-u , and CAD N/1 71, citing LKU 15 rev. 5-6: . . . $\text{]-ga}_2\text{-ga}_2\text{-ga}_2\text{-e // it-ta-nam-di}$.

Line 8: An alternative meaning for eme-gar is "spell" (MSL 2, 154 rev. 8': $\text{e-me-gar KAXME.GAR} = \text{ki-iš-[pu]}$), but the victim's "mood" (cf. CAD E 44) being affected by enchanted beer fits the context well. The assumed reading gig-ga for gi-ga is compatible with ḫul in this phrase, connoting $\text{ḫul-gig} // \text{zērûtu}$ "hostility."

The case ending of *ru-ub-tim* is difficult to explain.

Line 10: The phonetic writing *še* in Ms. a may represent the verb *šer₃*, with the semi-vocalic final consonant dropped, suggesting a variant reading for this line as *lu₂-bi šu sig₃-ga ba-an-šer₃ giri₃ sig₃-ga ba-an-šer₃*, "she bound the stricken hand and foot."

Line 11: For a close parallel to this passage, cf. Maqlû I 96-105 (cited Thomsen Zauberdia-*gnose* 74): "(The witch) who made figurines of me and made (it) resemble my person, who obstructed [my face] and shook my neck, pushed in my chest and bent my back, weakened [my arms] and affected my libido, alienated me from the gods, weakened my strength, distended the might of my arms and bound my knees, filled me with paralysis (*manga*) and decay, fed me with the food of witchcraft, made me drink the potions of witchcraft, and bathed me in filthy water, etc."

Cf. CAD K 66 reading *gir₅-gir₅ // kalāšu* "wrinkle," suggesting *gur₂-gur₂* in our line as a homonym. Alternative correspondences are offered by *kanāšu* and *qadādu*, "to bend, bow," or Maqlû I 98, *ešenšērija ikpupū* "who bent my back," but the image conveyed here is of writhing in pain.

CAD K 251 (following Falkenstein, ZA 11 [1939] 13: 18) reads *ku-us-s[a₃-a*, but the sign is *zu*, not *ku*, and the Sumerian and Akkadian texts can only be harmonized by reading *<i-dat>-su₂ uš-š[a-*, with Sum. *i-i* corresponding to *wašū*. The omission of *i-dat* is not surprising since Ms. b does not translate every Sumerian word into Akkadian, as in l. 49 below.

The term *zag-še* may correspond to *zag-LU* (= *še₃*) // *imittu* "shoulder" (CAD I/J 125); cf. also Falkenstein, LSS NF 1, 97:23 and 98:29.

Lines 12f.: Ms. a reflects a later text tradition by abbreviating the Enki-Asalluḫi dialogue, which tends to be cited in full in OB incantations.

Line 14: The *ma* of Lutz's copy (Ms. b, line 27) is no longer extant on the tablet. The variant of Ms. c can conveniently be found in

CT 17, 38:22 (cited CAD K 519a).

Line 15: The reading of Ms. c differs from Wilcke, AfO 24 (1973) 11: 16. Note *u₃-ub-da* (now more damaged than in Lutz's copy of Ms. b, line 28) for the more usual *u₃-ub-du₁₁(-a)* (cf. Geller Forerunners line 663).

Line 21: Although the reading *esir* in Ms. d is a *lectio difficilior*, it nevertheless may be supported by the variant *i¹-[si-ir]* in Ms. a, although a fuller phonetic writing *e-si-ir* occurs in Ms. a rev. iv 15.

The verbal infix in Ms. a suggests a second person singular dative form.

The two signs on the bottom of Ms. c obv. cannot be placed in the text.

Line 22: Cf. CT 17, 38:35, *š²šinig u₃-in-nu-uš š²šuh²huš gi-šul-ḫi // bi-i-nu [maš-ta]-kal su-ḫuš-ša₂ qa-an ša₂-la-la*.

Line 24: Cf. CAD G 88 bottom for *na₄-gi-rin-na*. Lutz's copy (Ms. b line 40) of the signs *na₄-du₈-ši-a* is incorrect, and the final *na₄* sign in the line is no longer preserved on the tablet.

Line 31: The unusual mention of Gilgamesh (line 31) is reminiscent of Maqlû I 38. Another fragment belonging to Ms. a has been published by F. Köcher in KUB 37, 109, but although the piece mentions Gilgamesh it cannot be precisely reconciled with the other duplicates quoted here:

- 1' [x]-x-an [.....]
- 2' [uš-r]i²-a ni-ga₂-aq-q[a.....]
- 3' [di-i]m-ma-ni ki-[.....]
- 4' [gi-i]l-ga-mi-iš-še ba-[.....]
- 5' [x-m]u e [.....]
- 6' [a-s]a-al-lu-ḫi na-am-gi-iš [.....]
- 7' [lu-u]l-lu du-mu di-i[n-gi-ir-ra-na]
- 8' [ḫe₂]-em-si-ki-il ḫe₂-d[a-da-ag]
- 9' [si-l]i-ma-an-ni šu di-in-g[i-ir-ra-na-še]
- 10' [ḫ]e₂-em-ši-in-[gi-gi]
- 11' [i-ni-im-an-n]a(?) i-ni-i[m-en-ki-ga-ak-ke(?)]
- 12' [x x x d]u-mu [.....]
- 13' [x x x] 'x' ni 'x' [.....]

Although these lines correspond roughly to lines 30-31 and 55-57 of our text, there are some difficulties, such as in line 6', where one

expects nam-šub eridu^{ki}-ga-ke₄ after Asalluḫi, rather than nam-giš.

Line 32: The references here to Gilgamesh and the ki-maḫ are reminiscent of the later Akkadian incantation against witchcraft which is addressed to Gilgamesh, and in which the witches are dispatched to the Netherworld; cf. Ebeling, TuL 122ff., and T. Abusch in: *History of Religions* 26 (1986), 150-51.

Lines 33-40: These lines only appear in Ms. c, although a possible trace of line 37 may appear in Ms. d, and lines 34 and 36 are reiterated in lines 49 and 51, but not in the same context. The manuscript traditions have thus diverged between the sources.

Line 40: The translation assumes ku₅ // batāqu. This line is the end of the tablet in Ms. c.

Line 41': The restoration of Gilgamesh's name is based upon line 31.

Line 43': One expects ad₆ (lu₂.uš₂) // šalamtu, CAD K 291a reads adda(lu₂.lu₂); cf. also CAD S 31, but lu₂-sis "rotting man" for corpse makes reasonable sense. This line is the top of col ii in Ms. a.

For uš₇-ri-a as kaššāptu "witch" (Il. 43, 45), cf. OB Lu A 298 (= MSL 12, 167) lu₂-uš₇-ri-a = ša ru-ḫe-e.

Line 44': Falkenstein's reading ^dNiraḫ-gim (cf. also CAD N/2 197) is negated by the variants an-su₃ or su₃-an, for which cf. Cohen Eršemma 130-31:1: an-su₃-ud-da-am₃ izi-gin₇ mu₂ // nu-ur₂ šamē^e ša ki-ma i-ša-tim nap-ḫat "light of heaven which shines like fire." Lutz's copy has omitted ki-ma.

Line 45': The ša sign is omitted in Lutz's copy, cf. CAD K 291a.

Line 46': Ms. a may read /madal/, another equivalent to giš.bu and synonymous with gazinbu // gaššū. CAD G 56b (following Falkenstein, ZA 11 [1939] 14) reads guru₅, although bal is attested lexically (MSL 17, 176 = Antagal VIII 190, Izbu Comm. II 107), and bal fits the traces of the broken signs in both

manuscripts, although the final -uš is difficult to explain with bal.

Note that in Ms. d this line occurs in a different order.

Line 47': Lutz's copy of uš₁₁-IM is incorrect. For the idea of the witch's magic rebounding upon herself, see Maqlû I 27f., "The witch's spell is evil, but her word is returned to her mouth and her tongue is tied"; cf. Thomsen Zauberd Diagnose 37.

Line 49': Cf. line 34 above. The proposed correspondence between ga-ara₃ and bašlu, i.e. "boiled (milk)," is only provisionally suggested here. The sign after ba- (not copied by Lutz) begins with three horizontals, making -a[š₂- a likely reading.

Line 51': Cf. line 36 above.

Line 53': Understanding urgu₂ for libbātu "wrath."

Line 54': Cf. Iraq 42 (1980) 28:23', ka-la₂ // ha-ṭi-im KA), and SIG₇-ALAN IX 252, ka-la₂ = ka-lu-u ša₂ me-e. Cf. also STVC 73, 38 rev. 7: pu₂ ka-la₂-bi-še₃ ši-im-mi-gi₄.

Line 62': = uš₇-zu. It is clear that the sources diverge at this point, since the gap in Ms. d at the bottom of col. iii consists of only five lines (judging from the obverse), which indicates that the text of Ms. b is considerably longer.

Line 63': = giš-šub-gim.

Line 64': Note the reverse order of this and the following lines in the sources.

Line 65': For kar gal as an epithet of Nergal, cf. ZA 63 (1973) 2 No. 12.

Line 66': ka-silim // tašriḫtu.

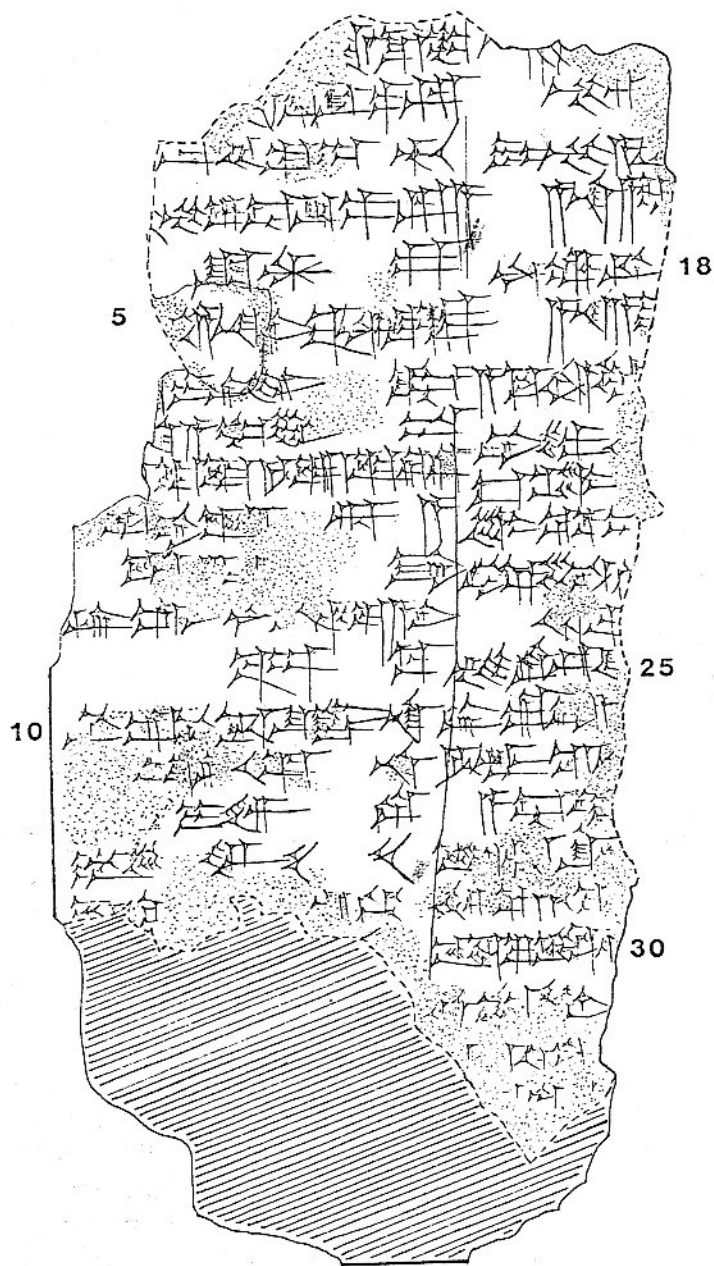
Line 69': Cf. Falkenstein, ZA 56 (1964) 82 suggesting gi-LI.BAR as a 'getreideart' based upon Gudea Cyl. A III 12 and Stat. G iv 16, reading BIL.GI-bar as gi-li₃-bar, but the word can be found in MSL 7, 192:123 = 8 (Hb VIII 19) gi-en₃-bar = ap-pa-ru.

Line 71': Cf. Šurpu VII 80.

Line 72'-73': Cf. Geller Forerunners 506-507.

Line 80': Cf. Geller Forerunners 766.

CBS 11933 obv.



CBS11933 rev.

